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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

GENERAL MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARIATS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE, HELD AT GENEVA FROM 19 TO 22 NOVEMBER 1991

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, by its resolution 45/9 of 25 October 1990 entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference", took note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General (A/45/526 and Add.1) and recommended that a general meeting between representatives of the secretariats of the United Nations system and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and its specialized institutions, as called for in Assembly resolution 44/8, should be organized in 1991.

2. Following consultations with OIC and an exchange of communications with other concerned organizations, it was agreed to hold the general meeting between representatives of the secretariats of the United Nations system and OIC at Geneva in November 1991.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

3. The meeting was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 19 to 22 November 1991 in seven sessions, including three sessions devoted to working group meetings (open-ended) in the priority areas of cooperation. The opening and the plenary sessions were co-chaired by the representatives of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and OIC.

4. The meeting was attended by 52 representatives of the secretariats of the United Nations system and OIC and its specialized institutions.

5. Statements were made at the opening meeting by the co-chairmen, the Director for Special Political Questions and Regional Cooperation, the United Nations Secretariat, and the Assistant Secretary-General of OIC.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA ITEMS

6. The meeting considered the following agenda items concerning the seven priority areas of cooperation:

(a) Review of cooperation and appraisal of progress achieved in the implementation of the two-year plan of action adopted in 1989 in the seven priority areas, namely:

(i) Food security and agriculture;

(ii) Development of science and technology;

(iii) Investment mechanisms and joint ventures;

(iv) Education and eradication of illiteracy;

(v) Assistance to refugees;

(vi) Technical cooperation among Islamic countries;

(vii) Development of trade;

(b) Report of the sectoral meeting on "Human Resources Development: Basic Education and Training", held at Rabat from 24 to 26 April 1991.

7. The meeting had before it the working papers prepared by the agencies and institutions of the two organizations on the seven priority areas of cooperation. Following exchanges of views on the agenda items in the plenary meetings, working groups were established under the joint chairmanship of the respective lead agencies of the two organizations. The working groups made a critical review of cooperation in their respective priority areas and assessed the progress made in the implementation of the plan of action adopted in 1989 (see A/44/424/Add.1, paras. 10-47). After consideration of the reports of the working groups, the plenary meeting adopted the conclusions and recommendations which appear below, on the seven priority areas of cooperation.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Food security and agriculture

8. It was considered that, in regard to agricultural research in OIC member countries, there is a need to stress those production systems that are not only responsive to the needs of resource-poor farmers but also protect their vulnerable natural resources base. The latter is important, particularly due to the fragile ecosystems under which farmers in most Islamic countries, particularly the smallholder subsectors, have to operate.

9. Technical cooperation among developing countries in the field of agriculture is very important for the promotion of agricultural production in Islamic countries with a view to attaining collective and household food security.

10. It was noted that recent intervention by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) through its technical assistance grants programmes has been based on providing support to strengthen the institutional capacity of national agricultural research systems at one level and to promote close coordination, collaboration and cooperation among developing countries' national agricultural research systems at the other level. Such technical cooperation is promoted in the context of relevant areas of research which are common to that group of countries and which are, therefore, assigned priorities by the individual research systems. The Fund's support is channelled through an international or regional agricultural research centre which provides a focal point for coordinating collaborative research activities.

11. It was felt that further cooperation in research between OIC and IFAD is possible, with a view to identifying institutions and areas that are deemed to be priority areas for some or most Islamic countries.

12. Islamic countries members of IFAD should continue to augment projects in IFAD's pipeline. It was noted that 45 per cent of all IFAD's activities to date are in Islamic countries and that there are at present 41 projects for 25 Islamic countries, about 50 per cent of IFAD's projects in the pipeline.

13. It was also noted that the IFAD Special Programme for Sub-Saharan African Countries Affected by Drought and Desertification (Phase I) was instrumental in contributing to household and national food security; all Islamic countries were urged to support IFAD in its endeavours to mobilize about $300 million for phase II.

14. It was emphasized that addressing household food security can make a substantial contribution to national food security since the rural poor in most OIC countries represent the largest part of the population and have the greatest production potential which can be tapped at relatively low cost.

15. Projects of the World Food Programme (WFP) in support of agriculture and rural development in OIC countries accounted for over half of the WFP development protfolio in 1990-1991 (55 projects with a value of US$ 705 million). WFP agreed to exchange information with the General Secretariat of OIC on its activities in OIC countries.

16. The meeting agreed on the need to reinforce cooperation between the United Nations and concerned bodies of OIC with a view to ensuring food security and agricultural development in States members of OIC.

17. Representatives of IFAD and the Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research (ICTVTR) discussed the issue of training the trainers in the agricultural sector. It was agreed that training activities in the agricultural sector will definitely help in promoting agricultural output and contributing towards the attainment of national and household food security.

18. To this end, it was felt necessary to incorporate in the overall programme of ICTVTR a discipline for training the agricultural trainer in which IFAD can make a positive contribution.

B. Development of science and technology

19. The Centre for Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) of the United Nations Secretariat and the Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development (IFSTAD) agreed on the following coordination programmes:

(a) Participation of IFSTAD in the following United Nations/CSTD meetings:

(i) The yearly Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Task Force meeting;

(ii) The 1992 ACC meeting on the role of science and technology in the least developed countries;

(iii) The biannual intergovernmental meeting;

(iv) The global science and technology consultation meetings;

(b) Joint holding of the workshop on technology assessment by CSTD, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and IFSTAD, with an optional theme on information technology;

(c) Workshop on technology assessment (September 1992, Maastricht, Netherlands) with a focus on developing a new pragmatic approach to this issue;

(d) Participation of IFSTAD in the Dortmund Conference on Conversion and in the preparatory meetings such as the Steering Committee meeting held from 22 to 25 February 1992 in Dortmund, Germany;

(e) Participation of IFSTAD in the current CSTD pilot study on endogenous capacity-building in Pakistan; and in a coordination meeting in New York on this subject;

(f) CSTD will forward to IFSTAD an invitation to participate in the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (June 1992, Brazil) and the two institutions will coordinate in its preparation;

(g) IFSTAD will submit a draft text of a bilateral framework agreement to CSTD for its consideration. IFSTAD and CSTD will cooperate towards its speedy finalization.

20. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat will also help to link IFSTAD with the United Nations Statistical Office in New York.

Cooperation between the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA) of the Secretariat and IFSTAD

21. DIESA will provide IFSTAD with information on the relationship between economic growth and alternative technologies so as to develop environmentally sound technologies and also any information available on the environmental statistics of OIC member countries.

Cooperation between the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and IFSTAD

22. IFSTAD requested UNCTAD's assistance in the following areas:

(a) Transfer of information technology to Islamic countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) region. A number of countries had initiated programmes on the transfer of technology. A seminar was envisaged on the subject in the Islamic Republic of Iran and IFSTAD requested UNCTAD to participate in the organization of this seminar.

(b) The foundation was engaged in developing guidelines (both technical and managerial) aimed at assisting the OIC member countries in the identification, selection, transfer and development of appropriate technologies. It expressed interest in the proceedings of the symposium held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB). It requested UNCTAD to consult the Foundation in publishing those proceedings. The Foundation also requested UNCTAD to arrange for publishing the proceedings in Arabic, English and French for the benefit of all member countries of OIC.

Cooperation between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and IFSTAD

23. IFSTAD and UNDP have already cooperated in the past in technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), particularly in the sponsorship of high-level science and technology training schemes; it is hoped that such cooperation can be usefully revived.

24. IFSTAD invited UNDP to share in its project related to mineral (non-oil) resources and its impact on the future economy of OIC member States on a regional basis; this area will be further explored and IFSTAD is committed to providing further documented information on this matter to UNDP for its further participation.

Cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and IFSTAD

25. The working session held between IFSTAD and UNEP in Jeddah in September 1991 agreed that UNEP will make available to the OIC General Secretariat and IFSTAD the previous studies undertaken by UNEP and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) on the living conditions of the Palestinians and the environmental situation in the occupied Arab territories.

26. At that meeting it was also agreed to develop integrated natural resources management pilot projects in three selected OIC member countries:

(a) Environmentally sound management of freshwater resources in Pakistan;

(b) Management of natural resources in fragile ecosystems - protective measures against desertification in the Niger;

(c) Energy for rural areas in Djibouti.

27. IFSTAD informed UNEP that the forthcoming sectoral meeting between the United Nations and OIC will be on "Science and technology with special emphasis on the environment", and it requested UNEP to collaborate with IFSTAD in preparing a joint working paper to be discussed at the meeting.

28. UNEP agreed to collaborate with IFSTAD in preparing a paper which will focus on "Environmentally sound technologies and appropriate indigenous technologies" and a consultant will be assigned for this purpose through the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia.

29. The overall cost of proposed OIC/UNEP activities is estimated to be in the amount of $600,000-$700,000. UNEP could contribute $250,000-$300,000 during the biennium 1992-1993 and the OIC secretariat would be expected to mobilize the remaining amount.

30. A joint meeting between UNEP and OIC will be held some time in December 1991 to finalize the project proposals so that UNEP can initiate the screening and approval process.

Cooperation between UNEP and the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC)

31. The meeting noted with satisfaction the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the OIC General Secretariat and the secretariat of UNEP. In this context, it was agreed that UNEP will extend invitations to SESRTCIC to participate in the two workshops to be organized in February 1992 in Nairobi, one on natural resource accounting and the other on environmental economics.

Cooperation between the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and IFSTAD

32. UNFPA and IFSTAD agreed to carry out further consultations and jointly explore all feasible avenues for concrete action concerning:

(a) Popularization of science and technology and the role of women;

(b) Promotion of women and girls in the science and technology fields;

(c) Role of women in environment and population management.

33. IFSTAD will invite both UNFPA and the Ankara Centre (SESRTCIC) to attend a meeting in Jeddah for this purpose.

Cooperation between ESCWA and IFSTAD

34. While reviewing their ongoing cooperation, IFSTAD and ESCWA agreed on the following:

(a) Draft ESCWA-IFSTAD Framework Agreement: ESCWA will forward the draft text to IFSTAD for review, with a view to its finalization and signature in Jeddah;

(b) Joint efforts will be carried out for the holding of two workshops on:

(i) New and advanced materials for technological development in the ESCWA region;

(ii) Integration of science and technology in the development planning process in the ESCWA region;

(c) Joint efforts will also be carried out in the field of space sciences, in particular:

(i) ESCWA will extend an invitation to IFSTAD to attend, and participate in, the deliberations of its forthcoming conference convened in cooperation with the Outer Space Affairs Division of the United Nations Secretariat (21 and 22 December 1991, Sultanate of Oman);

(ii) ESCWA would study a proposal to co-sponsor the seminar of the OIC Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology (ISNET) concerning "Low-Cost Launch Vehicles and Satellites";

(d) Cooperation in the field of environment. In this respect, ESCWA will provide IFSTAD with the proceedings and declarations issued by its related conferences. IFSTAD will also provide ESCWA with its programme, projects and activities related to environment.

Cooperation between the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and IFSTAD

35. The meeting took note of the ongoing joint activities programmes between UNESCO and IFSTAD, particularly the assistance programme to the Nigerian universities: Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria and Usman Dan Fodyo University in Sokoto. The two organizations have considered that further progress in these projects would require more evaluation and assessment so as to ensure successful implementation.

36. The meeting also noted that the "Harmonization of science and technology subregional policy for West Africa" scheme is under way between IFSTAD and the Economic Commission for Africa and that UNESCO would cooperate in this scheme through its regional office in Dakar.

37. The meeting noted that IFSTAD also provided preliminary information to UNESCO on the following two important oceanography projects, pending the delivery to UNESCO of the comprehensive project profiles at a later stage:

(a) Monitoring and oceanographic studies in the ROPME (Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment) area;

(b) Development of a regional storm-surge prediction system in the Bay of Bengal and Northern Arabian Sea.

Cooperation between the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and IFSTAD

38. The representative of WIPO discussed the status of cooperation between WIPO and the OIC General Secretariat; he also emphasized the joint activities of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and WIPO.

39. Future aspects of cooperation in this field were discussed, which will be subject to a cooperation agreement to be signed between WIPO and OIC. The General Secretariat of OIC will consult with WIPO in this respect.

40. IFSTAD will also submit to WIPO some proposals for further cooperation.

Cooperation between the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and IFSTAD

41. The forthcoming IFSTAD-UNIDO Training Seminar on Appraisal and Implementation Management of Industrial Investment Projects will be implemented following completion of the necessary preparations and subject to the identification of a source of funds.

42. IFSTAD expressed its great expectations for UNIDO's contribution to the "Solar Cooker for the Sahel" project; UNIDO will be sending an expert to the Group of Experts' meeting (26-30 December 1991, Cairo). UNIDO is also expected to support the second phase (field assessment) of this joint IsDB-IFSTAD project.

C. Investment mechanisms and joint ventures

Cooperation between UNIDO and OIC

43. Referring to the note on UNIDO's activities in OIC member States and the joint activities of UNIDO and OIC institutions, the two parties stressed the need to continue and strengthen cooperation between both organizations. This cooperation will take the form of assistance with the formulation of industrial policies of OIC member States and programmes of OIC institutions in the area of joint industrial investment, and of technical assistance with management training.

44. In addition, UNIDO will maintain its contacts with subsidiary organs of OIC (IFSTAD, Ankara Centre, Casablanca Centre, Dhaka Centre) and with OIC-affiliated institutions such as the Islamic Development Bank, with a view to strengthening cooperation with them.

45. In order to give concrete form to the strengthening of mutual cooperation, OIC and UNIDO could consider drafting and signing a framework agreement.

D. Education and eradication of illiteracy

Cooperation between the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and OIC

46. The representative of UNFPA reaffirmed his organization's commitment to the memorandum on cooperation and liaison with OIC to promote awareness of the social, economic and environmental implications of national and international population problems; and to extend systematic and sustainable assistance to OIC member States at their request in dealing with their population problems and activities related to population policy formulation and implementation including, inter alia, the taking of population censuses, the improvement of registration of vital events, population surveys, research (particularly on matters relevant to decision-making) and action programmes within the UNFPA mandate. This includes training of personnel, strengthening policy units in Governments and development, basic education and population education to meet the needs of girls and women as well as maternal and child health and child-spacing services. UNFPA will continue to play a catalytic role in assisting Islamic countries to develop common projects using the technical cooperation for development (TCD) model of cooperation and to strengthen its collaboration with regional institutions and OIC's specialized institutions in areas of mutual interest.

Cooperation between UNFPA and SESRTCIC

47. During the bilateral discussion, the representatives of UNFPA and SESRTCIC discussed the possible collaboration between their respective organizations in the areas of demographic studies and data collection and training, and expressed readiness to enter into consultation in order to exchange information and to explore areas of collaboration together with other organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and OIC.

Cooperation between the World Health Organization (WHO) and OIC

48. The following recommendations were agreed upon:

(a) Continued consultation and cooperation between WHO and OIC in the field of basic education and training for human development;

(b) Practical steps have already been taken in this cooperation, which will support a multidimensional programme for human development encompassing a variety of activities, all of which are interlinked and interrelated;

(c) WHO/Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) will assist ISESCO in implementing the Prototype Action-Oriented School Health Curriculum (PAOSHC) for primary schools, which was accepted by ISESCO in 1989 in the Islamic countries;

(d) WHO/EMRO will assist and cooperate with OIC in the field of health education and a healthy lifestyle;

(e) WHO will promote emergency preparedness and response in the member States within the health-for-all strategies and provide timely and appropriate response to emergencies in collaboration with member States and other organizations, including OIC;

(f) In any future cooperation, WHO will focus also on other priority areas which are within the two-year plan adopted in 1989 and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 45/9.

Cooperation between UNESCO and the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA)

49. The meeting noted the growing importance of cultural development and the many expressions of culture as an essential tool for social development and educational progress. It agreed that identified and well-planned cooperation between specialized institutions of OIC and specialized agencies of the United Nations system would be of profit for all. IRCICA (Istanbul) and UNESCO would cooperate to explore the possibility of organizing in the near future a meeting on "Islamic arts, culture, history and philosophy". Such a meeting would identify areas of possible exchange of information and development of priority areas, identifying joint projects and working out a tentative plan of action. The meeting noted that the World Decade for Cultural Development would offer a propitious framework within which numerous possibilities for joint action exist.

E. Assistance to refugees

50. It was noted that in order to prevent population movement within countries owing to looming food insecurity, it is imperative that a longer-term solution be found for reducing variability in production by fostering a regime of stable production.

Cooperation between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and OIC

51. The meeting noted with satisfaction the development of wide-ranging cooperation between OIC and UNHCR in the area of assistance to refugees.

52. The meeting also noted with appreciation the assistance extended by OIC and its member States to the large number of refugees in the OIC region, and further noted with satisfaction the UNHCR role in providing international protection and assistance to those refugees.

53. The meeting took note of the close working relationship between the two organizations in terms of exchanging, on an urgent basis, the information on all matters relating to refugee situations involving the OIC member States in order to ensure effective cooperation and prompt response to the needs of the refugees in those States.

54. The meeting welcomed the signature in May 1991 of a special agreement between UNHCR and ISESCO providing general and permanent cooperation/coordination between the two organizations in the specific sector of education. It also noted the desire of UNHCR to organize a seminar on asylum and refugee law in the Islamic countries in 1992 and the agreement of OIC, in principle, to participate actively in this seminar.

55. The meeting took note of OIC's readiness to participate in UNHCR meetings on a reciprocal basis in accordance with the existing practices of the two organizations.

56. The meeting noted with great appreciation the adequate assistance being extended to refugees by WFP and called upon WFP to continue and enhance such aid.

57. The meeting also noted with satisfaction the productive working relationship between the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and OIC and its specialized institutions in providing assistance to Palestinian refugees.

58. The meeting expressed its support for the ongoing collaboration between UNHCR and IsDB. In this connection, the general meeting was informed that a draft agreement of cooperation between the Islamic Development Bank and UNHCR is under consideration for the benefit of the refugees in need of assistance in Islamic countries.

F. Technical cooperation among Islamic countries

Cooperation between DIESA and OIC

59. The following fields of cooperation between OIC and DIESA could be envisaged:

(a) Agreement of cooperation between the OIC General Secretariat and DIESA;

(b) Exchange of information and data in the economic and social fields;

(c) Cooperation in environmentally sustainable development: environmental statistics and environmental accounting, manuals and possible exchange of expertise and training.

Cooperation between UNDP and SESRTCIC

60. The meeting reviewed the progress made by UNDP and SESRTCIC, Ankara, in the area of TCDC and technical cooperation among Islamic countries (TCIC) during the past years. It observed that cooperation between the two organizations had led to significant developments resulting in the holding of three meetings: one at the ministerial level and two at the level of the

national focal points for technical cooperation. In addition, SESRTCIC has been able to set up a technical cooperation information system which includes 12 databases on various aspects of technical cooperation work in the OIC member countries. SESRTCIC has also been able to identify and help establish the national focal points in almost all the member countries, and with the second meeting of the focal points it was able to initiate the exercise of matching the capacities with those of the technical cooperation needs in the OIC countries. The meeting further noted that during these meetings, the focal points made 57 bilateral contacts, as a result of which preliminary projects were identified for the approval of the respective countries.

61. SESRTCIC emphasized that in order to advance the work of technical cooperation it would need continued support and help from UNDP, especially in the follow-up work to the projects of common interest identified during the second focal points meeting.

62. SESRTCIC also stated that it would need the continued support of UNDP for the participation of representatives of least developed countries in the meetings and training programmes relating to TCIC.

Cooperation between UNDP and OIC

63. UNDP and OIC had an exchange of views on the strengthening of their cooperation and the possible conclusion of an agreement of cooperation between the two organizations. To that effect, they agreed that further contacts would be developed between their respective headquarters.

64. UNDP and OIC also mentioned the possibility of cooperating in the field of Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) which has been the subject of correspondence between the two organizations. It has been agreed that contacts will be maintained with a view to implementing a programme of cooperation in this field.

Cooperation between UNDP and ICTVTR

65. The meeting was informed that proper funding modalities between ICTVTR and UNDP will be explored to finance, through regional or interregional indicative planning figures and/or resources earmarked for TCDC activities, the following inputs:

(a) Travel fares for participants and trainees in ICTVTR from States members of OIC;

(b) Travel fares for resource personnel for international seminars/workshops organized by ICTVTR to meet the needs of the States members of OIC;

(c) Teaching aids, demonstration and experimental equipment for some of the laboratories in order to strengthen the capacity of the Centre.

Cooperation between the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and ICTVTR

66. Representatives of ITU and ICTVTR discussed problems of mutual interest in the field of telecommunications, particularly introduction of optical fibre technology in telecommunications in OIC countries.

67. Taking into consideration that ITU has already organized seminars/workshops on optical fibre technology in a number of countries, the representative of ICTVTR expressed the desire that such seminars/workshops should be organized in the near future for States members of OIC.

68. The representative of ITU agreed to explore the possibility of organizing such seminars/workshops in joint collaboration between ITU/ICTVTR.

G. Development of trade

Cooperation between DIESA and the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT)

69. ICDT and DIESA agreed to have a regular exchange of information and publications on the world economy and international trade. They also agreed that ICDT would be invited to participate in the biannual meetings of Project LINK.

Cooperation between UNCTAD and OIC

70. The Economic Department of the OIC General Secretariat took note of UNCTAD's activities in the field of shipping, port and maritime transport and the technical assistance being rendered to developing countries in strengthening their technical and managerial capabilities in these important areas. While some of the OIC member countries were already benefiting from these activities, others interested could equally avail themselves of UNCTAD's services in these areas. THE OIC secretariat would pursue the matter with the Islamic Shipping Association, requesting it to establish direct contact with UNCTAD and pursue consultations on issues of mutual concern.

71. With regard to trade and development, several OIC institutions expressed interest in futher strengthening their cooperation with UNCTAD in areas aimed at promoting trade and regional and subregional integration efforts among member countries of OIC. These included the following:

Cooperation between UNCTAD and ICDT

72. The following are specific areas for cooperation with UNCTAD:

(a) It was agreed that, within its approved budgetary resources, UNCTAD could participate with ICDT in jointly organizing a symposium to examine the experience of subregional and regional groups in their trade relations and to explore the possibilities of establishing an Islamic common market. It was stated that other organizations such as IsDB and the Ankara Centre as well as

the General Secretariat of OIC could also be associated in the preparations for and organization of the proposed symposium.

(b) ICDT and UNCTAD raised the issue of complementarities that exist between the efforts to establish a comprehensive network of trade information systems among OIC member countries and the planned activities of the Arab Trade Financing Programme (ATFP) under project RAB-91-0829 for the creation of a similar network. ICDT could be associated in the process of implementing the above project, particularly as 50 per cent of the OIC members will benefit from the information system to be installed by ATFP. It was suggested that the executing agencies and ATFP might wish to consult with ICDT on this matter in order to take stock and coordinate efforts.

(c) In the area of trade negotiations, it was agreed that ICDT and the UNCTAD secretariat should assist the OIC member countries in their efforts to implement the recently agreed Preferential Trade System through, inter alia, training in negotiations strategies.

(d) It was also agreed that information relating to the International Symposium and Business Week on Trade with Central and East European Countries, organized at Anatalya, Turkey (April 1991), should be made available to the Centre for dissemination to other members of the organization wishing to promote their trade and cooperation with the emerging Central and East European countries.

Cooperation between UNCTAD and SESRTCIC

73. SESRTCIC expressed interest in the draft ASEA-African project proposal for the exchange of experience among integration groups of the developing regions. UNCTAD was requested to make available to the Centre information on such experiences as might be of immediate and potential interest to other regional and subregional groups of Islamic countries as well as to emerging individual Islamic countries in other regions eager to forge efforts towards forming similar groupings aimed at promoting trade and development among themselves.

Cooperation between UNDP and ICDT

74. The representative of UNDP was informed about some of the activities to be implemented by ICDT, for which UNDP support would be appreciated. These activities include seminars on trade negotiations to be organized at the regional level jointly with UNCTAD in relation to the launching of the Preferential Trade System among OIC member States. ICDT intends also to organize supply and demand workshops at the regional level to promote trade in specific agricultural and industrial commodities among OIC member States with institutions such as IFAD and UNIDO. Another activity relates to the setting-up of trade information networks for the existing regional economic groupings which are members of OIC with the participation of UNCTAD and the International Trade Centre (ITC).

Cooperation between ESCWA and OIC

75. In reviewing the work programme and activities of both OIC and ESCWA and after discussing the progress of cooperation between the two organizations, and in order to strengthen the existing cooperation, OIC recommended that a memorandum of understanding be signed by the Secretary-General of OIC and the Executive Secretary of ESCWA to lay the foundations for joint fruitful cooperation in various fields responding to both organizations' mandates.

Cooperation between IFAD and ICDT

76. It was agreed that a study on the potential for trade of food products among OIC member countries be undertaken. On the basis of this study, a supply and demand workshop on specific food products may be organized to identify potential transactions among exporters and importers of OIC member countries. These trade flows may be stimulated by the entry into force of the Preferential Trade System already adopted by the Standing Committee for Commercial and Economic Cooperation (COMCEC) and currently going through the process of signature and ratification.

Cooperation between UNIDO and ICDT

77. ICDT and UNIDO representatives discussed issues of mutual interest, with reference to document UN/OIC/CM/CRP/8 relating to the meeting held at Geneva from 13 to 15 September 1989.

78. In particular, ICDT and UNIDO may cooperate in the following fields:

(a) Holding, at the regional level, of a seminar on promotion of industrial commodities trade;

(b) Holding of a supply and demand workshop for trade promotion of specific industrial commodities among States members of regional groupings of OIC;

(c) Holding, at the regional level, of a seminar on evaluation of industrial investment projects. ICDT is interested to receive all relevant information relating to the UNIDO Project Profile Screening and Pre-approach Information System (PROSPIN);

(d) Exchange of publications and in particular making available UNIDO's publication entitled "How to Start Manufacturing Industries".

H. Follow-up action on the report of the sectoral meeting on basic education and training, held at Rabat in April 1991

79. The meeting took note of the report of the Rabat meeting and agreed that the two lead agencies of the United Nations system and OIC (UNESCO and ISESCO)

will continue their efforts to enhance cooperation in the area of human resources development. In regard to follow-up action since the Rabat meeting on "Human Resources Development: Basic Education and Training", UNESCO reported that ISESCO, on behalf of the OIC system, elaborated a "Draft Programme for Basic Education and Training for the Development of Human Resources in Islamic Countries", which provided an encouraging overall assessment of the human resources status in the Islamic countries, identifying specific target areas for interventions and assistance. After consultations between UNDP, UNESCO and ISESCO, it was decided to engage a consultant to elaborate a draft programme of operational activities in basic education and training involving United Nations and OIC agencies, according to their respective mandates and resources.

80. The consultancy, jointly financed and monitored by UNESCO, UNDP and ISESCO, is currently under way, and will identify specific areas which would contribute to the improvement of human resources development in Islamic countries; identify all actors involved in the above endeavour, their roles and relationships, i.e., the role of ISESCO and other OIC institutions and the role of respective United Nations agencies; designate the sources of funds to be utilized for launching the programme and submit a realistic draft budget; and address the mechanisms needed to meet the requirements for the long-term sustainability of the above programme, beyond its initial phase.

81. The consultancy will take into account the proposal of the Rabat meeting that the programme of cooperation should pay attention to:

(a) Vocational and technical training of personnel;

(b) Production of educational material;

(c) Educational research: collection of data and information;

(d) Administration of education;

(e) Science and technology in basic education;

(f) Basic education and population education to meet the needs of girls and women;

(g) Protection of the environment;

(h) Health education;

(i) Education for the disadvantaged;

(j) Development of traditional educational institutions;

(k) Development of vocational components, as well as traditional handicrafts and industries, into basic education programmes.

82. Priority will be given to activities to promote the basic education of women and girls as well as of disadvantaged groups. This draft programme will be reviewed by the technical working group, composed of the bureau of the Rabat meeting, as well as other interested organizations and agencies from the United Nations and OIC. It is expected to meet early in 1992 in Jeddah.

83. The technical working group will assess progress achieved and suggest, on the basis of the draft programme, concrete steps to draft a United Nations/OIC programme of action for implementation in 1992-1993.

I. Other matters

84. The meeting agreed on the convening of sectoral meetings in the priority areas of cooperation, namely, environment, disaster relief and science and technology, as recommended by the 1989 and 1990 meetings of the focal points of the United Nations and OIC, including the follow-up of the sectoral meeting on human resources development held at Rabat in April 1991. It was agreed that the next sectoral meeting will be on science and technology with special emphasis on the environment.

85. It was also agreed that, while the general meetings would continue to be held every two years, bilateral contacts between United Nations agencies and their OIC counterparts could be held as and when required as part of follow-up action on issues/areas agreed for mutual cooperation.

86. The meeting encouraged the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system that have not done so to negotiate cooperation agreements with OIC and its specialized institutions and, where appropriate, to sign memoranda of understanding with them.

87. The secretariats of the United Nations system and the General Secretariat of OIC agreed that the next meeting of the focal points could take place in Geneva in 1992. The exact dates and venue will be confirmed in due course, after consultations between the United Nations and OIC.

88. The General Secretariat of OIC expressed its gratitude to the officials of the Secretariat of the United Nations for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting and for the attention and assistance given to all participants.